

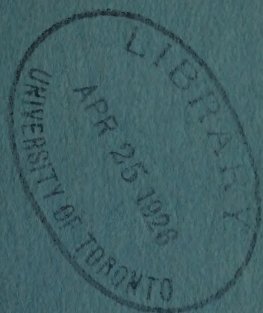
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THE AMERICAN HISTORICAL NOVEL
(ON AMERICAN THEMES)
BEFORE 1860

THE EARLY NOVELS OF
JAMES FENIMORE COOPER
(1821-1831)



BY
ERNEST ERWIN LEISY
A.B., University of Kansas, 1913
A.M., University of Chicago, 1919

AN ABSTRACT OF A THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIRE-
MENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN ENGLISH IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF
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James Fenimore Cooper—so the popular legend runs—was a man who wrote stories about idealized Indians and the wilderness, now read mainly by boys; who created Leatherstocking, the man without a cross; and who spent an irascible old age winning petty lawsuits. Further reflection may call to mind that he was enamored of the sea as well as of the wilderness, and that one of his stories had something to do with a spy. All this, of course, is true; but that Cooper did much more than this, has been discovered comparatively recently. The explanation is to be found, in part, in the fact that after Cooper's death in 1851, the vogue of his type of romance having passed also, his popularity suffered a decline reaching its lowest ebb between 1870 and 1880. Another reason is that the novelist's dying injunction that no biography be authorized was carried out so literally by his oldest daughter and literary executrix that many family papers of value were destroyed. She afterwards published in the *Atlantic Monthly* for 1887 two reminiscent articles about her father, but these are rambling and uninformative in character. In 1883—thirty years after the death of the novelist—Professor Lounsbury succeeded surprisingly well in piecing together the outward facts of Cooper's life.¹ The "Correspondence of Cooper," just published,² reveals little about the workmanship or about the personality of the novelist, except by way of emphasizing the fact that his social and political ideas meant more to him than his art. Cooper's own introductions, added to his works in 1849, the articles by his daughter, and the results of Lounsbury must suffice for the external evidence on Cooper's work; whatever conclusions are reached on internal evidence may be modified when materials still in the possession of the Cooper family are given up to the public.

¹Any discussion of Cooper must go back to Lounsbury, T. R. *James Fenimore Cooper*, American Men of Letters series, Boston, 1883. W. B. Clymer's *Cooper* is mainly an abridgment of Lounsbury. *James Fenimore Cooper* (1913) by Mary E. Philips supplies anecdotal information and pictures.

²*Correspondence of James Fenimore Cooper*. Edited by his Grandson, James Fenimore Cooper. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1922.

Of the critical writings concerning Cooper the best is an essay by W. C. Brownell in *American Prose Masters* (1909), in which he applies the canons of criticism to the works of Cooper *in toto* under the captions: Form and Substance, Defective Art, Romantic Realism, Indians, Characters, Women, and Patriotism. John Erskine in *Leading American Novelists* (1910), pp. 51-130, has taken up in greater detail the leading works, using the critical-historical method. Carl Van Doren in *The Cambridge History of American Literature*, I, 293-306, and *The American Novel* (1921), Chapter 2, follows somewhat the same method as Erskine. W. L. Cross in *The Development of the English Novel* (1899) has a brief but pointed six pages on Cooper and his relation to Scott and his successors. These critics think highly of Cooper's work but have been interested primarily in Cooper's results rather than in the history of how Cooper produced his results. Only Brownell and Erskine incidentally, and Cross briefly, touch upon Cooper as an historical novelist. Leaving Cooper's other historical work out of account, they concentrate upon *The Spy*, declaring it an historical novel of adventure, as Cooper had not the background for genuine historical work and did not test his fictitious characters in great historical crises such as in *Kenilworth* or *The Abbot*. This seems a too arbitrary restriction of the term "historical," for which Brownell makes some amends when he declares that the alliance of romance with reality in Cooper's tales, "his general and personal interest in the life he depicted makes his account of it solidier art, gives his romance even more substance and meaning than Scott's historiography."³ How extensively and well Cooper portrayed the setting of a past time, how he related his work to his public, what connection it had with the work of his predecessors and contemporaries, the consequent originality of his contribution, and the nature and extent of his influence on the historical novel have received insufficient attention.

Considering the results of the experiments with native material outlined in the preceding chapter, Cooper might well have entered with diffidence upon the task of writing an "American" novel. That he was in any definite sense aware of the work of his predecessors in the field of the American novel seems doubtful. His had been a frontiersman's boyhood, followed, after an erratic two years at Yale, by apprenticeship at sea and a decade as a coun-

³Brownell, W. C. *American Prose Masters*, New York, 1909, p. 18.

try squire. Then by the merest chance he fell into authorship. To make good his boast that he could write a better book than the novel of English society life which he was at that time reading, he wrote *Precaution*, a story of earls and dukes. But knowing how devout an American Cooper was, some of his friends made it a matter of reproach that he should have written a novel foreign in substance and feeling. He acknowledged the justice of the imputation and resolved to atone by inflicting upon the world and himself, as he said, a second book,⁴ *The Spy*, the patriotic nature of which should admit of no cavil.

From the writing of *Precaution*, Cooper carried over very little save ability to manipulate a story. It taught him nothing in the way of adapting the formula of the current novel to the treatment of native material. He had still to learn to conform to the principles of the Waverley novels and at the same time to find a tractable American theme. What was the nature of the historical novel then current?

"Scott had gathered up," says Dr. Loshe,⁵ "and recombined, according to formulas of his own, many elements present in the fiction of his day,—the tendency to localized or national tales with that interest in humble personages on whom local characteristics are most deeply impressed, which appears most plainly in Miss Edgeworth's Irish stories; the interest in romantic landscape and word-painting of natural scenery which found its most striking expression in Mrs. Radcliffe's theatrical yet impressive scenes; the tale of adventure reinforced by the revived interest in travel and antiquarian taste for old buildings and trappings; and the eagerness for an imaginative interpretation of history which had expressed itself in many would-be historical tales, whose hopeless inaccuracies had a naive honesty of good intention."

⁴How little encouragement was held out is best related by himself: "So little was expected from the publication of an original work of this description, at the time that it was written, that the first volume of *The Spy* was actually printed several months before the author felt a sufficient inducement to write a line of the second. . . . As the second volume was slowly printing, from manuscript that was barely dry when it went into the compositor's hands, the publisher intimated that the work might grow to a length that would consume the profits. To set his mind at rest, the last chapter was actually written, printed, and paged, several weeks before the chapters which preceded it were even thought of."

⁵Loshe, L. D. *The Early American Novel*, New York, 1907, pp. 83-84.

These ingredients which Scott had mixed in varying proportions in his different works, it occurred to Cooper, might be adapted to native manners and conditions.

The essential requirement of the Scottish novels—conflict, patriotic association, and difference in social manners—obviously suggested to Cooper the American Revolution as the scene for his novel. The details of that warfare, particularly as they were related by the aged participants in Westchester County, New York, where he was at this time living, Cooper had listened to with that intelligent interest with which a seaman may follow strategy on land as well. He knew this neutral ground, between the British in New York City and the American army in the highlands of the Hudson, over which the tide of battle had ebbed and flowed, as Scott knew his native heath. As he turned over in his mind the possibilities afforded by this setting he recalled an anecdote which his neighbor John Jay had related years before concerning a shrewd, unselfishly patriotic spy employed by him during the war. This "legend" became the nucleus of his story. Judging from internal evidence, Cooper must have been delighted with the possibilities of the subject for was it not still a matter of record how the sensibilities of the public had been wrought upon by the fate of Hale and of Andre?⁶ Was not his friend, Dunlap attracting multitudes to his play, entitled *Andre*? It next occurred to him to present his spy in the guise of a pedlar such as Edie Ochiltree, who had fascinated readers of *The Antiquary*. So vividly did Cooper realize his conception of Harvey Birch that the romance had all the semblance of a memoir.

The public veneration for Washington required that he be introduced somehow. In 1780 the patriot army, under General Washington, occupied a line of connecting positions extending from Philadelphia across northern New Jersey, to the fortified post of West Point on the Hudson. Along the Hudson River, the American lines extended to Peekskill, and outposts patrolled the country as far south as Tarrytown. From this point to the channels which separate Manhattan Island from the mainland, a distance of about forty miles, lay the "neutral ground," the No Man's Land of the Revolution. It was the object of the patriot army to prevent the British forces from drawing supplies from this region, but Congress

⁶See Riverside edition, p. 21. "The recent fate of Andre has created much irritation on both sides." Cf. also pp. 68, 208, 298, 301.

would not permit devastation. Consequently, the "neutral ground," swept by constant raids, and exposed to the unchecked evils of civil war, became the abode of the lawless and adventurous spirits who flourish best in times of upheaval and disorder. The fall of Charleston, the treason of Arnold, and dissensions among officers of the Continental Army made a general disintegration of that military force which was the sole support of the patriot cause seem at hand. The Revolution was in danger, not only from avowed Tories but from lukewarm followers anxious to keep on the winning side. This combination of circumstances suggested to Cooper the military situation in 1780 in the Neutral Ground as the most suitable background for his story.

Romantic themes were for Cooper more important and interesting than restoration of the historic past. The instinctive Toryism that made it natural for Scott to poetize history had no counterpart in Cooper's rationalized liberalism.⁷ But it was not necessary for his mind to be saturated with history as was that of Scott. Compared with Europe, America had little history, and that little Cooper knew, particularly as it pertained to New York. In the present instance, he had his information from eye-witnesses and from nine years' residence on the scenes. It was decidedly to Cooper's advantage to have a "legend," or the outline of a plot, suggested to him, since, with this in mind, he could in unfolding a story give to it all the illusion of reality. "Perhaps by chance," says Carl Van Doren, "Cooper here hit upon a type of plot at which he excelled, a struggle between contending forces, not badly matched, arranged as a pursuit in which the pursued are, as a rule, favored by the author and reader."⁸ High and low characters could easily be borrowed, in fact, his public expected that. The Wharton family, consisting of a high-spirited young blond, a faded elder daughter, a young officer, and a feeble father was the conventional novel family; the pedlar as the central link of the action came from *The Antiquary*; Dr. Sitgreaves was an imitation of Scott's pedants; Betty Flanagan, the sutler, partook of the nature of Miss Edgeworth's Irish characters of low life; the negro was an adaptation of the court fool; the remaining characters were be-captained and be-majored as was fitting in a tale of love and war.

⁷Brownell, W. C. *op. cit.*, p. 14.

⁸Van Doren, Carl, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

As much of his public was Tory, and as even English readers might be appealed to, Cooper faced the problem of writing his story so as to please the patriot and to enlist the interest of these others besides. Fortunately for Cooper, and for art in American historical fiction, his training under an Anglican tutor and his marriage into a Tory family restrained him from such partiality for the Americans as the first historical novelist might easily have indulged in and thereby set the standard for succeeding writers. Cooper's solution in taking a house divided against itself, in a section supposedly neutral but actually overrun by skirmishing parties of either side, supplied also the essential element of conflict. He added suspense by the uncertainty he created in the reader's mind as to which party the spy served and by having him persecuted equally by bands of Skinners and by Cowboys. With the sketch of the depredations of the Skinners he enlisted Tory approval of the veracity of the picture. The first volume was in fact as inviting to loyalist as to patriot. The mysterious Harper, though he inspired considerable awe, had little in his reticent demeanor to indicate that he was the commander-in-chief of the continental troops. But the patriotic purpose of the book was not to be lost sight of. In his very persecutions the spy was becoming heroic, and there could be no mistake as to his position in the outcome. By making the heroine, regardless of her Tory family, espouse the American cause, and by exposing as a bigamist the English colonel, with whom her sister was in love, the author further won the favor of the patriot. Here and there he added touches of piety which might bring his fable into favor with the reader.

The handling of historical matter, particularly the treatment of Washington, presented a problem of peculiar difficulty. According to Scott's practice up to this time, an historical character must have a minor role. This should have simplified the problem but Washington was too much venerated to be simply disposed of. Cooper hit upon the solution of introducing him as the shadowy Mr. Harper, who looms somewhat gigantically through his disguise, and is revealed, in the end, as the ally of the spy and the patriot leader. While Cooper displayed a gift for historical portraiture, he fell victim to the contemporary notion of Washington and portrayed him as the sobered and aged President rather than as the General of the Continental Army. His stiffness *en famille*

and his melodramatic skulking about the highlands and in caves were later by Cooper himself acknowledged a mistake. But to the general historical facts of his story Cooper was true. Truer, in fact, than the historians. And this, as has never been pointed out, constitutes *The Spy* a document of historical value. For the Whig historians, following the Revolution, had misrepresented the war as a united uprising against the mother country instead of the civil conflict, which, according to the best modern criticism, it in large part was. The intense Whig tradition begun by Andrews and Gordon, who based the earliest histories of the Revolution on Burke's yearly summaries of the events in the Annual Register, persisted not only in Weem's *Life of Washington* but in Marshall's also, and was influential through the ten editions of Botta's translation. The federalism of Hildreth (1849) carried on this bias; and when Bancroft in 1852 reached the Revolution, he broke all records for a violently partisan and timorously defensive history of the Revolution.⁹ For leaving a distinct impression of the fratricidal nature of the strife, when a just version of the struggle seemed impossible, Cooper deserves credit hitherto not accorded him.

The Spy, as I have tried to indicate, was in every sense an experiment. If it succeeded, others of its kind might follow; if it failed, the American novel would have to wait, for Irving, Cooper's only possible competitor, "deliberately chose short stories to avoid any rivalry with Scott."¹⁰ But so well had Cooper estimated the tastes of the public that the experiment was from the first a success. In three months it was in its third edition. It won the "respect of the generally contemptuous English critics,"¹¹ and the American press, which had liked the book by instinct, was pleased with the mild praise as though it were a national tribute."¹² The happy issue of the experiment inspired other native writers; it encouraged Cooper in particular.

⁹See Fisher, Sidney G. *The Legendary and Myth-Making Process in Histories of the American Revolution*; Proceedings of the American Philosophical Soc., Vol. LI, No. 204, April-June, 1912. See also references in footnote 29, page 27 of this thesis.

¹⁰Van Doren, Carl. *op. cit.*, p. 15.

¹¹For the attitude of English critics toward American writings see Cairns, W. B. *British Criticisms of American Writings, 1815-1833*, University of Wisconsin Studies in Language and Literature, No. 14. Madison, 1922.

¹²Erskine, John. *op. cit.*, p. 65.

For a novice like Cooper to follow up at once the career unexpectedly opened up to him by the success of *The Spy*, required that he draw upon material already in hand. His acquaintance with Westchester county he had used felicitously; there remained his boyhood at Cooperstown, and his years at sea. Affection for the pioneer village among the forest-clad hills surrounding Otsego pressed for utterance and Cooper began "a descriptive tale" which he named *The Pioneers; or, the Sources of the Susquehanna* (1823). With a few Cooperstown characters and the outlines of a situation in mind, Cooper launched upon the improvisation of his story. He transcribed and generalized¹³ for the purposes of fiction his memories of the hunter, Shipman, who came to his father's, Judge Cooper's, Hall to present his game; the motley characters and nationalities of the early settlement; the town itself as it was forty years ago, with its raw street of wooden houses; the drunken Indian at the inn; the snowy congregation crowding to the fire at the church; the seasonal sports of the rough people; the virgin lake and wilderness, the forest conflagration, ushering out with grim reality the period of romance. Cooper was too downright to obscure the grossness of the picture. Derelicts and scoundrels he well knew were associated with a new society as much as its idealists, and he brought them in. Representatives of various social units were made to aid in the evolution of the plot. Judge Temple, empire-builder, with his daughter just home from school, and an insurgent young Effingham were given the center of the stage; Natty Bumppo, protagonist of the advancing civilization, his companion Chingachgook, christened John, and various frontier types, were grouped about these.

In this work, Cooper showed a more aggressively American spirit, derived no doubt from the favorable reception accorded *The Spy*. In both the subject-matter and in his presentation of it he was independent of Scott,—seeking in the picture of American empire-building and American prodigality to set his country honorably before foreign readers. As was fitting in an avowedly "descriptive tale," he laid aside the "pursuit-rescue" scheme for a

¹³*The Pioneers* (Houghton Mifflin ed.). Introduction, xxxiii, states Cooper's intention to generalize; it further states his theory of fiction: "Rigid adhesion to truth, an indispensable requisite in history and travels, destroys the charm of fiction; for all that is necessary to be conveyed to the mind by the latter had better be done by delineations of principles, and of characters in their classes, than by a too fastidious attention to originals."

set of sportsman's sketches not unreminiscent of Irving. Life in the American Bracebridge Hall¹⁴ was exhibited, with its Christmas abundance not to be outdone by Irving's sketch of an English Christmas, and its sports like the turkey-match, the shooting of myriads of wild-pigeons, the seining or spearing of bass, the deer-chase on the lake, maple-sugaring in spring, and sleighing-parties in winter, each carrying its peculiar appeal. But there was also dramatic tension and an interest in a theme suggesting Greek fatalism: the law of nature, embodied in the uncouth old hunter and the Great Serpent, is seen in conflict with the law of man represented by the Judge. In the end the law of nature yields to the stocks and the fire which civilization brought, and the only escape is a reluctant departure toward the setting sun. A conventional plot was introduced by Cooper as a concession to his readers, but it is of secondary importance. A wrong done by Judge Temple to Effingham's father is righted by the slightly complicated love-match of Miss Temple with young Effingham, in fiction a favorite method of restitution. The girl's excessive sensibility, the episode of the panther, the appearance of a sybil, and of a gold-digger, the hero's clouded ancestry cleared up in the penultimate chapter, all are to us dregs in the old wine but gave the story the flavor it needed in order to sell; the new wine that Cooper introduced has ripened to modern taste: it is the "essential wonder of pioneer life" as it is presented in this epic of the wilderness.

The Pioneers has never received consideration as an historical novel. Van Doren speaks of it¹⁵ as Cooper's first "realistic presentation of American manners." Yet a novel of manners it is not. That life in the frontier town was not what it had been and never would be again, Cooper realized definitely.¹⁶ Susan Fenimore Cooper says,¹⁷ "The new narrative, like that which preceded it, was, in one sense, to be connected with the history of the country; it should follow the first steps of civilization in its conquests over the wilderness." The conceivable contention that

¹⁴Richard Jones, a hanger-on, who conceals his dependent state by a kind of horse-play raillery of his patron and occasionally mixes toddy evidently was taken over from the bachelor in *Bracebridge Hall*.

¹⁵Van Doren, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

¹⁶*Introduction*, xxxvii, note: "Though forests still crown the mountains of Otsego, the bear, the wolf, and the panther are nearly strangers to them." See also p. 35.

¹⁷*Introduction to The Pioneers*, i.

more than forty years must elapse between the time of the action and the date of composition is invalid: forty years is exactly the length of time by which *The Spy*, generally acknowledged an historical novel, is separated from its events; and *The Antiquary* is remote only twenty-one years. In America, moreover, changes in manner, customs and outward appearances are so great in a single generation that the historical romancer need not revert to antiquity.¹⁸ It might, further, be argued that no actual historical character appears in the book. But the contemporary imagination did not need to be reminded that here was the story of Daniel Boone, for to it the story had become a legend.¹⁹ There is abundant evidence that its readers regarded it as an historical novel. So well did Cooper understand the passing nature of this pioneer life and so effectively did he characterize it here, that with subsequent writers the novel of pioneer community life became the characteristic type of American historical novel.²⁰

In *The Pilot* (1823) Cooper drew upon his experiences at sea. How thoroughly he was at home here his biographers have remarked, but how thoroughly he viewed life from a seaman's point of view, they have not insisted upon.²¹ When it was apparent that Yale would do him no good, Cooper's father shipped him before the mast, and here on his first voyage, which was long and stormy, occurred an unforgettable chase by pirates and a search by a British man-of-war. Such adventures were ordinarily discussed over a cob-pipe, on a wharf-barrel, or, at most, got into chap books, but no one thought to put them into a novel, for who but landsmen read novels? Smollett, to be sure, had had sailors but the detailed maneuvers of vessels and the tang of the old salt he

¹⁸That this was already realized may be seen from the review in *The North American Review*, 15:250.

¹⁹*Portifolio* 15 (1823) 230: "Natty Bumppo, . . . we think, has been modelled from the effigies of old Daniel Boone, who abandoned the society of his kindred and built a hut among the Indians; and persisted in moving further into the interior as civilization invaded his wild domains. . . . It might indeed be called *historical*; for the historian can scarcely find a more just and vivid delineation of the first settlements of our wilderness."

²⁰See Chapter V.

²¹Not only did he write five sea novels, a *History of the Navy*, and articles about the navy, but even in his land novels sailors were frequently introduced, and *The Prairie*, for example, is viewed as a sea of sand upon which the prairie schooners sail. *The Pathfinder* makes use of his experiences upon Lake Ontario.

had not given. Nor was it done, to Cooper's thinking, in *The Pirate*, which had just appeared anonymously. When he asserted that it was the work of a landsman and not a sailor, he was challenged to make good his contention by writing a story from the seaman's point of view. His pugnacious temper was as ready to take the dare as it had been when it first tripped him into the authorship of *Precaution*.

Not unmindful of the experimental character of the venture, and wise through the unexpected success of *The Spy*, Cooper determined to blend nautical fiction and history. "It was conceived necessary," says his daughter,²² "to connect with the narrative some historical name which should give it importance, and for the same reason, the period of the Revolution was chosen as the date of the tale. The nautical annals of that time were brief, and a rapid glance was sufficient to show that among the historical figures that of the bold adventurer, Paul Jones, stood prominent as one of the few adapted to a work of fiction. His cruise in *The Ranger* suggested the plot of *The Pilot*."

The historical facts in brief were these. Jones, after receiving a lieutenant's commission in the navy, suggested that the American vessels, which were few and inferior in comparison with those of the enemy, should be used as privateers. In the "*Ranger*" he captured several trading vessels in the Irish channel; he attacked his home town of Whitehaven on the coast of Cumberland, and burned one vessel; he sacked Lord Selkirk's castle, and defeated and captured the "*Drake*," an English sloop-of-war, with the loss of only eight men.

Cooper chose the northeastern coast of England as the setting for his story. This gave him the two-fold advantage of exploiting sea maneuvers which *The Pirate* lacked, and of complicating these with a love story in the castle, which readers of Abbey romances cherished. In their eagerness to point out its novelty as a sea tale, students of Cooper have overlooked the Gothic tradition which *The Pilot* continued. In the management of the story there was not so much that was new as might be supposed, for in its general outlines it was *The Spy* done in terms of the sea. The skirmishes of the Neutral Ground became chases between frigates and men of war, the devotion of Harvey Birch was supplanted by Long Tom Coffin's love for the sea, and an incognito Paul Jones replaced

²²Introduction to *The Pilot*, xv.

an incognito Washington. But such economy of creative effort was justifiable and perhaps necessary for Cooper if he should lavish upon the details the interpretative sympathy that he was fitted to give. It was the sailor in him that led the frigate through the channel in masterful manner and that made his seamen such likeable fellows. He knew how good sea-dogs would itch for a fight or boast of their prowess. "Their ships were handled," says Captain Mahan, "as ships then were and act as ships still would under the circumstances."²³ Joseph Conrad has been glad to acknowledge²⁴ that Cooper taught him profound sympathy and artistic insight into the sublimity and mystery of the sea.

Cooper's choice of the "Father of the American Navy" as the historical figure with which to connect his sea tale was peculiarly happy in view of public enthusiasm following the success of the navy in the War of 1812.²⁵ But in portraying this character he has been considered no more successful than he had been with Washington. The statuesque pose of Mr. Gray becomes, through reiteration, an affectation which it is hard to reconcile with the fiery Scotchman of history. Cooper himself at a later date expressed dissatisfaction with the unreality of the portrait.²⁶ It becomes clear in the course of this story that Cooper regards Paul Jones as a free-lance whose devotion to America proceeded from his desire of personal distinction. "A large part of his behavior might be called Byronic," Erskine has suggested, "since it appears to be learned in the general school of the Giaour and the Corsair."²⁷ As an historical document *The Pilot* has worth because it faithfully portrays the sea life of the time of the Revolution and because it has called attention to a phase of the war historians have been inclined to neglect.

The favor with which Cooper's three historical novels had been received convinced him that here lay his field. How seriously

²³*Atlantic Monthly*, 100:337.

²⁴Conrad, Joseph. *Notes on Life and Letters* (1921), p. 78. The entire article, "Tales of the Sea," should be read for its tribute to Cooper's insight into the poetry of the sea.

²⁵*North American Review*, 1824:314, "By implicating the tale with our naval history, the author possesses himself of one of the few positions from which our national enthusiasm is accessible."

²⁶Introduction, xxii.

²⁷Erskine, *op. cit.*, p. 71. As early as 1800 there had appeared *The Life and History of Paul Jones, the English Corsair*. See Seitz, Don C. *Paul Jones, a complete bibliography*. New York (1917).

Cooper considered himself an historical novelist and how auspicious were the times for a national romancer has not been understood. The fiftieth anniversary of the battles of Lexington, Concord, and Bunker Hill was at hand. The spirit of nationalism was intense. President Monroe had promulgated his Doctrine, General La-Fayette (a personal friend of Cooper's) had come to tour the country he had helped to save, and Daniel Webster in his Bunker Hill oration was trying to put into pleasing phrase the popular mood. Cooper, in the blush of popularity, conceived a plan for a series of historical romances, on a national scale, to be called "Legends of the Thirteen Republics," the scenes of which should be laid in the various colonies that had shared in the Revolution. The first of this series was devoted to Massachusetts, and was entitled, *Lionel Lincoln, or the Leaguer of Boston* (1825).²⁸

"Nothing that industry could do," says Lounsbury,²⁹ "was spared by Cooper to make this work a success. In the preparation of it he studied historical authorities, he read state papers, he pored over official documents of all kinds and degrees of dreariness. To have his slightest assertions in accordance with facts, he examined almanacs, and searched for all the contemporary reports as to the condition of the weather. He visited Boston in order to go over in person the ground he was to make the scene of his story." He built his story around the battles of Lexington, Concord, and Bunker Hill. The entrance of a vessel through the patrolled part of Boston, carrying young Lincoln, an officer in the British service; the journey past old North Church, the Province House, and Faneuil Hall to the heart of the city; the state of unrest among the citizenry, along with the doubt among the British whether the rabble will fight; the organization of the Sons of Liberty and the news of the coming of Clinton, Burgoyne, and Howe; a spirited account of the running fight from Lexington to Concord; the uprising of a hundred thousand men under leaders like Warren, Putnam, and Gage; and at length an account of the Battle of Bunker Hill, in which the hero is wounded, were put into the first volume. In the second, history was practically cast to the winds, and the private fortunes of the hero were related,—his recovery

²⁸How much this book has been neglected may be inferred from the fact that Lounsbury gives it but two paragraphs: Erskine cuts these down to one, and others are content with one condemnatory sentence.

²⁹Lounsbury, T. R. *op. cit.*, p. 49.

under the tender ministrations of a girl, his marriage to her, amid ominous portents, and the disclosure through the spectacular machinery of Gothic romance of what had been clouded regarding his ancestry.

For the first time in his treatment of American history, Cooper had a subject in which he was obliged to substitute for personal experience painstaking research. Not having been very successful in handling character that required adherence to historical fact, it was a question whether his mind could assimilate the results of his investigations in a way to stimulate rather than to hamper his imagination. For better or for worse, he made no attempt to delineate an historical character. Warren, Gage, and Putnam he mentioned but their possibilities as literary material he did not recognize; Burgoyne, Howe, and Clinton he misrepresented in the few pages he allotted to them. With the historical background in and about Boston he was more successful, giving according to Bancroft, an effective and truthful rendering. As heretofore, his sympathy with the losing side equalized the contest and made it a worthy struggle. For the critical reader none of his books has a more inviting opening. But Cooper soon found the attempt to blend his complicated plot of domestic intrigue with history irksome, and shifted attention to the melodramatic fortunes of his hero. It is difficult to understand why he should have made an unheroic English Major the hero of an American story. It can hardly be explained on the ground of Cooper's established antipathy to the New England character, although the fact that he was too little at home in Massachusetts may have caused him to piece out the story by giving it a melodramatic turn in keeping with what was popular on the stage of the day. Mr. Van Doren's remark³⁰ that the book "failed to please as his earlier novels had done" must be accepted with qualification, as contemporary reviews vouch for its own popularity as well as for that of *The Leaguer of Boston*, a play based upon it.³¹ It would seem that the "Gothicism" of the story as manifested in the character of Ralph with his sudden and apparently unaccountable appearances and his

³⁰Van Doren, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

³¹*Southern Literary Messenger*, 1838:375, speaks of *Lionel Lincoln's* popularity as unprecedented. "It was this production that created in Boston and throughout New England, a popularity for Mr. Cooper's works, at one period so great, as to become among novel readers, almost a mania." Cf. *U. S. Literary Gazette* 1:340; *North American Review* 23:154.

almost supernatural power over the Byronic Lionel, the spectacular apparition of an overshadowing arm on the wall of King's Chapel during the marriage ceremony, and the sudden death of the simpleton at the hands of his maniac father who dies with him, was an element in the historical novel that gave it a contemporary appeal which has been lost in an age of other critical standards.

When Cooper abandoned after the first attempt his cycle of thirteen romances of the Revolution, he did not give up his career in the field of historical fiction. In his next work, *The Last of the Mohicans, a Narrative of 1757* (1826), he went back even farther into his country's past. In *The Pioneers* he had sharpened his tools at frontier material and he now wished to execute a design in which Indian life should be presented in detail. But comparatively little was known about the red man at the time. Before the Revolution he had inspired terror but more recently his melancholy fate was to a greater or less degree upon the white man's conscience. Chateaubriand had given currency to the tradition of the noble savage, but only an ethnologist like Gallatin or Duponceau had inquired into his origin, language, religion, ethics, government, habits and manners, with a sense of their scientific value. Cooper's own knowledge of the race was limited to an occasional meeting with an Indian at Otsego Hall, or a delegation at New York or Washington. This personal acquaintance he now supplemented, according to his daughter, by a study of Heckewelder, Colden, Penn, and Smith.³²

The setting of his story came to Cooper while in 1824 with a party of English friends he was on a visit to the Lake Champlain region. At Glenn Falls one of the party directed his attention to the caverns in the river as a suitable location for a romance. The suggestion pleased the novelist, and when the ruins of Fort William Henry nearby came to mind, it occurred to him to use the episode of the siege and massacre at the fort during the French and Indian War as the basis of the story. For the adventures of his fictitious characters with which Cooper came more and more to occupy the second volume of his novels, he here fell back upon his "pursuit-rescue" scheme. He managed this scheme with sufficient adroitness to display, incidentally, a great variety of Indian customs and traditions.

³²Introduction to *The Last of the Mohicans*, p. xviii. How seriously the subject took hold of Cooper his daughter elsewhere records: In her childhood there was nearly always an Indian book on her father's table.

It is not generally known that Cooper's Indian was drawn in large part from Heckewelder.³³ This venerable man had been a Moravian missionary among the Delawares and published some years later an account which rather idealized them. In view of this fact, Cooper deserves credit for representing the Indian as cunning and treacherous as well as generous. When it was objected that he gave a more favorable picture of the red man than he deserved, Cooper said:

"It is the privilege of all writers of fiction, more particularly when their works aspire to the elevation of romances, to present the beau-ideal of their characters to the reader. This it is which constitutes poetry and to suppose that the red-man is to be represented only in the squalid misery or in the degraded moral state that certainly more or less belongs to his condition, is, we apprehend, taking a very narrow view of an author's privileges. Such criticism would have deprived the world of even Homer."³⁴

What Cooper noted about the red men was their acute senses, developed through woodcraft and warfare, their belief in omens and their tortoise and beaver worship, their mummerly, their stoicism, especially when enduring torture at the stake, their "gift" of revenge, their war dance, their love of baubles, their respect for the feeble-minded or the aged, their chaste attitude toward female captives, the silence of the young, their funeral customs and deference to the mound for the dead, their councils of war and fierce tribal pride, their use of metaphorical speech, and the crafty eloquence of their orators.

In order to show the antitheses in Indian character, Cooper created in Uncas a noble savage, in conformity with the philosophy of nature then in vogue, and bestowed upon Magua the deceit and treachery associated with the Indian when he was a menace. With his customary repetition of types,³⁵ Cooper was inclined to reintroduce the hunter and his Indian comrade from *The Pioneers*. But they were old there and had fallen upon evil days. Yet he resolved to take the risk. It was a stroke of genius not only to set them back nearly forty years, but to shown them in the vigor of manhood undeniably the same individuals. The other characters—an old man with his motherless two daughters, one of whom is given in marriage to a representative of the British army for his

³³*North American Review*, 26:373.

³⁴Preface to *The Deerslayer*.

³⁵See Appendix C.

devoted services to the family and the other, a quadroon, whose kidnapping by the Indian villain motivates the pursuit of the second volume—were redolent of the make-up box and the property-room. The bore, however, represents a variation from type, as Cooper intended the half-witted Connecticut psalm-singer for a modern adaptation of the minstrel of medieval romance.³⁶ The character whose possibilities Cooper now first realized and upon whom he lavished his devotion was Natty Bumppo. Upon his Christian stock he grafted many of the virtues of savage life. It seems to me as if, without consciously doing so, he has blended in him reminiscences of Sir Charles Grandison and the natural man of Chateaubriand. In him the historical novel gained a new type of hero with whose simplicity, downrightness, competence, unsophistication, and virgin prejudice the natural American has for Europeans come to be identified.³⁷ How indigenous he was appears when he is compared with Rip Van Winkle and the characters of Irving. Thackeray declared *La Longue Carabine* one of the great prizemen of fiction. "He ranks," said he, "with your Uncle Toby, Sir Roger de Coverley, Falstaff. . . . and the artist has deserved well of his country who devised them."³⁸

The historical element centering about the siege of Fort William Henry and the subsequent massacre, Cooper might have gotten up in an hour's reading. Perhaps its scant basis of fact accounts for the truth of the picture. Colonel Munro, the English commander, was "elaborated according to the needs of the plot and Cooper's idea of the British soldier of the period," says Erskine. "As a soldier he is of course brave, but not astute. Cooper lets him stand for the usual British incapacity to cope with the Indians which Braddock so fatally illustrated."³⁹ It is not likely that any of Cooper's readers would have impugned the conception. The portrait of Montcalm is, in my judgment, Cooper's best picture of an historical character.⁴⁰ Deeply regretting that

³⁶*Last of the Mohicans*, Riverside ed., p. 133.

³⁷*The Nation*, 112:255.

³⁸*Roundabout Papers*.

³⁹Erskine, pp. 80-81. This view is suggested by Cooper's own note to his text, Riverside ed., p. 4.

⁴⁰Erskine, p. 81. "A beautiful conception of old-world grace and courtliness, which Cooper must have drawn with affection," Erskine remarks, "yet with all of Montcalm's adroitness, his management of the Indians and his tact in treating with a conquered foe—the reader is made to feel the moral slipperiness which the hearty Englishman resents with a national distrust of French traditional perfidy."

history would perpetuate only his glorious death on the Plains of Abraham,⁴¹ Cooper without pronouncing final judgment upon his conduct, represented Montcalm as putting policy above moral principle when he did not, by restraining his Indian allies, prevent the massacre which followed the capitulation of the English. In this position he was in accord with Timothy Dwight,⁴² a careful historian, who remembered the event as a child and expressed the view which prevailed in New England and New York. The massacre itself, with its opportunity for pageantry in Scott's vein, did not fire Cooper's imagination.

What Cooper did in *The Last of the Mohicans* that he had not done so well in his previous historical novels, was to make the central theme, the conquest of the Indian by the white, turn upon and be explained by the chief historical event of the book, the savagery of the red men at Fort William Henry. He achieved a skillful blend of research and fabrication that has resulted in its being regarded the best treatment of the ominous theme of race conflict. Whatever case the critics may have made against his Indians, and of late they have rather deferred to him, his conception of the red man has been effective and is not likely now to be replaced. When people wish to know what it was to live in the days when the aborigines were in power, it is to this story of disastrous chances, of hair-breadth 'scapes, and moving accidents by flood and field, that the imagination naturally turns.

So well was *The Last of the Mohicans* received at home and abroad that Cooper was moved to write at once another tale of the Indians. The character of Leatherstocking had grown upon him and he was ready to hazard a third venture with him. The popular mind had followed the removal of his prototype, Daniel Boone, to the plains beyond the Mississippi and the report of his recent

⁴¹Riverside ed. *Last of the Mohicans*, pp. 211-12. Cooper's only comment that I can find on the relation of the sister muses.

⁴²Dwight, Timothy. *Travels in New England and New York* (1821), III, 362-376. After stating that Montcalm made no reasonable effort to check the Indians, he emphasizes the timidity and imbecility of Webb who lay at Fort Edward with 6,000 men, doing nothing. Dwight narrates as from Captain Noble, who was present, that when Sir William Johnson would gather volunteers from Webb's garrison to proceed to Munroe's assistance, Webb forbade it. Cooper's rendering of the massacre is sharply criticized by Martin in his *Montcalm en Canada*, chaps. 4 and 5. Cf. also Rameau, *La France aux Colonies*, II, p. 306; *N. H. Prov. Papers*, VI, 604, 605, and Stone, W. L. *Life and Times of Johnson*.

death there. In that mysterious Louisiana Purchase, moreover, new pioneers were seeking to satisfy their hunger for land. Cooper also knew, though this has not been pointed out before, that the public mind was further directed to this frontier by the proposal by act of Congress to remove the Indians to this territory. These considerations caused Cooper, although he had never seen the plains, to determine upon a western setting for his next story, *The Prairie* (1827).

"During the spring of 1826 Cooper followed a deputation of Pawnee and Sioux from New York to Washington to study their origin for *The Prairie*."⁴³ The sources which he drew upon Cooper never indicated directly but it may be pretty safely inferred that he looked into the Journals of Lewis and Clarke, that he used Long, and perhaps saw Mackenzie.⁴⁴ From these he learned of the wild horses, the buffalo herds, the prairie dogs, flocks of migratory birds, prairie fires, and mounted Pawnee, Tetons, Konzas, Omahas, and Osages that were to be found on these endless plains. Among these he placed a squatter from Kentucky, trekking with his family and brother-in-law by prairie schooner across the Nebraska prairie.⁴⁵ As Cooper knew nothing of the life at first hand he was obliged to draw upon his imagination more largely than heretofore. This he did as easily in Paris where he was at the time residing as he might have done at home in New York. As usual he reintroduced many of his characters from his preceding work. Hawkeye reappeared as the aged trapper, given somewhat more to moralizing.⁴⁶ Mahtoree was a slightly milder Magua mounted on horseback. The Pawnee Hard Heart was another Uncas, and the

⁴³Phillips, Mary E. *James Fenimore Cooper* (1912), p. 129.

⁴⁴Introduction to *Last of the Mohicans*, p. xviii.

⁴⁵The analogy which the spectacle afforded in Cooper's mind to the conquest of Canaan, has not been commented upon, but a case can be made for it from the biblical names he for the first time applied to nearly all the characters; from the bee-hunter in his land of honey, the encounters with the "Ishmaelites of the plains," the Sioux, the stampede of the buffalo furnishing the terror of wild beasts, and the problem of the Red Sea transformed into that of prairie fire, with Leatherstocking the Moses to show how to circumvent this difficulty.

⁴⁶This was fitting for an old man. Thackeray pronounced Leatherstocking the greatest character created in Fiction since the *Don Quixote* of Cervantes and he thought the death scene in *The Prairie*, in which the old trapper said "Here!" as surpassing anything he had met in English literature. Phillips, 1621. Thackeray imitated this scene in Colonel Newcome's "Adsum!"

psalmist became a pedant in search of genus and species. The lovers were already married and were kept in the background. The "pursuit-rescue" device to advance the plot was continued but was employed with less vigor. In every way the tone of the story is a more subdued one. Only an assault by Indians, a stampede by buffalo, the prairie fire, and the consternation over the treachery of the brother-in-law disturb the author's brooding over the epic-vastness of the plains.

Whatever Cooper may have owed to Scott at the beginning of his career, he owed little to him now. His poetical rendering of the prairie landscape with its elemental figures was a far cry from the landscapes of Scott in the style of Mrs. Radcliffe and from his treatment of characters. Perhaps the greatest change of all was in Cooper's central figure, the squatter. Instead of making him heroic, Cooper showed him untroubled by vision, restless to shake off the restraints of law and society. His wife, "a shabby, inarticulate prairie Hecuba," was Cooper's first attempt to depict the wife or mother, and has remained, with Ruth in *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish*, his most noteworthy portrait of a woman. Although Cooper's story went back but twenty-three years, its manners were those of a time and condition remote from his own. Constructed as it was from historical sources it has further qualification for inclusion here. Its poetic rendering of the atmosphere of that time and place has given an effective if not accurate idea of the prairie, an idea which Easterners have until recently retained.

Cooper's next novel, *The Red Rover* (1828), was perhaps his best sea tale but it was not historical, all details having been invented "without looking for the smallest aid from traditions or facts." Hard upon it came another Indian tale, *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish* (1829). In this novel Cooper turned aside from his Leatherstocking series, for such his Indian tales had come to be, to the red man's last stand against his white opponent in New England in the seventeenth century. Some of his imitators,⁴⁷ Miss Child, Mrs. Cheney, and Miss Sedgwick, had directed attention to early New England life, and Cooper now turned in the same direction, selecting the period of King Philip's war as the basis for his novel of Puritan life. The account of Eunice Williams's Indian captivity at Deerfield had become classic, and Increase Mather and Hubbard had each given his narrative of the Indian war with the

⁴⁷For a full discussion of these, see next chapter.

bias of those who knew the "heathen" chiefly as an enemy. Irving's short tale, *Philip of Pokanoket* (1814) had served as a corrective to this legend. The episode of Goffe, the regicide, had been treated by Stiles in his *History of the Judges*. In fiction, James McHenry, one of Cooper's earliest imitators, had dealt with Goffe in a Gothic romance, *The Spectre of the Forest* (1823). Scott in his *Peveril of the Peak* (1823), had called attention to it.⁴⁸ As a national romancer, Cooper doubtless felt it incumbent upon him to make yet another excursion into New England material.

In the arrangement of his story, Cooper reversed his usual plan, by making the first half almost wholly fictitious, and putting into the last half the historical material concerning Goffe, and the extermination of Philip's Indian cohorts. The leading episode of the first volume, an Indian assault upon a settler's block-house, was probably suggested by the analogous attack on the feudal castle in *Ivanhoe*. Cooper found it difficult to supply a central character as the Puritans were to him uncongenial. In Captain Heathcote he created a man of piety, forced to the Connecticut frontier by disagreeable and petty religious squabbles. The story deals with his domestic life, his constant fear of attack, and the final assault of Indians who destroyed his home and kidnapped his daughter. It also treats of a general renewal of hostilities after an interval of several years during which American enterprize built up the village of Hartford; of the timely warning by the mysterious stranger, resulting in the overthrow of Philip; and of the restitution of the wept-for daughter who clings to her Indian mate. For the historical background Cooper selected, probably from Trumbull,⁴⁹ a few items regarding the early settlement of Hartford in 1635, which he used for the openings of his volumes; and then, omitting the early years of the war as unsuited to his purpose, selected for the dramatic climax the final hounding and defeat of Canonchet in 1675. A mysterious stranger, introduced as Submission, is employed in the *dénouement* to warn the villagers of the

⁴⁸Like many other romantic stories, it rests upon insufficient authority, Cf. Fiske, John. *The Beginnings of New England*. p. 218; "The story rests chiefly upon the statements of Hutchinson, an extremely careful and judicious writer. . . . Goffe kept a diary which came into Hutchinson's possession. . . . A paramount regard for Goffe's personal safety would quite account for the studied silence of contemporary writers like Hubbard and Increase Mather."

⁴⁹*The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish*, Preface. (Houghton Mifflin ed.), p. xi.

final assault in which he meets his death. The reader of *The Spy* and *The Pilot*, already acquainted with Cooper's *method* of introducing historical characters, had no difficulty in recognizing Goffe, the regicide.

As an historical novel, *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish* was a failure. Cooper was too much a victim of his early bigoted training to enter with sympathy into the life of the Puritans. Their religious fanaticism combined with worldly discretion in exploiting the natives he illustrated repeatedly. The head and front of their offending he attributed to their hypocritical pastor, the Reverend Meek Wolfe, who may or may not have been intended as a caricature of Cotton Mather. On this incapacity of Cooper's to depict the founders of New England, Professor Lounsbury has said: "Paradoxical as the assertion may seem, he was too much like the Puritans to do them justice;"⁵⁰ which Professor Erskine has wisely corrected by adding,⁵¹ "In so far as Puritanism coincided with his nature, he portrayed it admirably in this novel; he lets the reader see the practical vigor, the exalted piety, and the domestic affection of Mark Heathcote and his comrades, for these virtues he can recognize, as he could recognize the common piety and the common sense of *The Pilgrim's Progress*. But the mastering vision that burns like flame in the Puritan temper, impelling it to strenuous action, was entirely hidden to Cooper, if we can judge by his writings. . . ."

What further contributed to its failure, and is not so apparent unless approached from the standpoint of the historical novel is Cooper's infelicity in dealing with manners so remote in time. What people wore, apart from broadswords, he failed to mention. His Wampanoags were fundamentally not different from the Hurons he presented in *The Last of the Mohicans*. As in no previous book he frequently lapsed into a strained circumlocutory style that appears to have been meant for the picturesque language of old romance.⁵² The braggadocio with which the second volume, written in Paris, opened, together with the ill-temper displayed toward the Puritan type, was to bring Cooper into disfavor at home and abroad. As the next decade of his work was controversial, or upon European subjects, this chapter

⁵⁰Lounsbury, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

⁵¹Erskine, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

⁵²For example, "the kine had yielded their nightly tribute," used four times. "Smoke" is called "the vapor that rolled upward;" a child is always spoken of as "the cherub," etc.

may well come to a close here, deferring the discussion of Cooper's later, regional novels until some other time.

In the decade from 1821 to 1831—his most fruitful period—Cooper was more consistently an historical novelist than has been recognized. In *The Spy* he represented more fairly than contemporary historians the actual nature of the Revolutionary conflict. *The Pioneers* immortalized the passing of the frontier, while *The Pilot* was our first historical novel of the sea. *Lionel Lincoln* was an earnest of national romance, to which he returned in *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish*. In *The Last of the Mohicans* he set down memorably the passing of the first American. America was his theme, nothing more, nothing less. For this task he lacked the historical acumen of Scott. Of American history in general and of New York history, in particular, he had a tolerable understanding. His life had fortunately been sufficiently varied and representative not to necessitate getting up his local coloring with infinite toil. In one or two cases—so rapid were social changes—he could depend on aged eye-witnesses for a reasonably accurate idea of a former day.

His American predecessors taught him practically nothing. From Scott he learned the general formula for his work. Like him he turned to native scene as the groundwork for his romance. From him, also, he learned to give larger place to romantic theme than to restoration of the past. From him he borrowed the ultra-romantic hero and most of the conventional types of character that he repeated with little variation in successive novels.

But all this was at the beginning. Once started he was less influenced by foreign authors and subjects than any of his contemporaries. In his first book he substituted for lairds, a pedlar, and in place of a castle he used the Wharton farm-house. Save for his delineation of certain types, his second book was completely indigenous. In his third, he outdid the Scotchman himself in giving the very life of the sea. The Gothic tradition which ran through much of Scott, Cooper retained only in *Lionel Lincoln*, finding a more rational substitute in the terror inspired by the Indians; and, in the mystery of the sea and the wilderness, a new source of awe. Because he was not steeped in history and because America's brief existence did not make it necessary to delve into antiquity, he substituted adventure for archaism. He showed that "ivied walls, time-worn castles and gloomy dungeons, were not

necessary to make a land of romance; that the war of the revolution rivalled, in romantic interest, the war of the crusaders; that the Indian warrior equally with the turbaned Saracen, was the theme of the romancer; and that heroes need not always be clad in iron mail, nor heroines have only knightly lovers sighing at their feet, or breaking lances and heads to attest their devotion."⁵³ His was the romantic tale of adventure. That is not to say, however, that "his invention was not without a solid basis; he is not to be neglected as an historian. . . . No one fixed the current heroic traditions of his day more firmly to actual places."⁵⁴

Cooper was prolux, as Scott was prolux, but that, it has been said, was a secret of his illusion. In technical faults Cooper's work abounded; what he enjoyed was to walk cross-country, and little he cared whether his boots were polished or no. At its best his style had the rapid motion and color so much needed in the historical novel of action. Naturally a fighter, he could give his story the fire and life which such a novel should have. He wrote far better than was required of him.

While he was not the historical novelist that Scott was, he was Scott's most influential successor, and as Thackeray said, his country deserves well of him. For the epitome in fiction of early American life one goes not to Irving or Hawthorne but to Cooper. His representation of it as the conquest of nature by the pioneer has been considered so characteristic that the historical novel as he conceived it dominated the writing of American fiction practically up to the Civil War.

⁵³*Southern Literary Messenger*, 1838:373.

⁵⁴*The Cambridge History of American Literature*, I, p. 306.

VITA

The author of this dissertation, Ernest E. Leisy, was born on a farm near Mound Ridge, Kansas, December 22, 1887. He was graduated from the two-year course of the Mound Ridge High School in 1906, taught public school the following year, attended Bethel College Academy at Newton, Kansas, from which he was graduated in 1909, taught public school in 1910-11, attended the University of Kansas, receiving his bachelor's degree from this institution in 1913. He received a University Scholarship at Harvard where he did graduate work in English in 1913-14. From 1914 to 1918 he was Professor of English at Bethel College, Newton, Kansas, taking out one year, however, for graduate work in English at the University of Chicago, from which institution he received his Master's degree. Since 1918 he has been an Instructor in English at the University of Illinois, devoting his spare time to study toward the doctor's degree. He has published reviews in several journals and a short article in *Modern Language Notes*, but nothing of importance.

Langh.

Leisy, Ernest E.

L.E.H.

The American Historical

L.

Novel (On American Themes)

Before 1860

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NAME OF BORROWER

Schindler, staff

